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The gospel-method of justification.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED IN
St. THOMAS'S
JANUARY 2. 1758.

For the Benefit of the
CHARITY-SCHOOL,
In *Gravel-lane, Southwark.*

By GEORGE BENSON, D.D.

Published, at the request of the MANAGERS.

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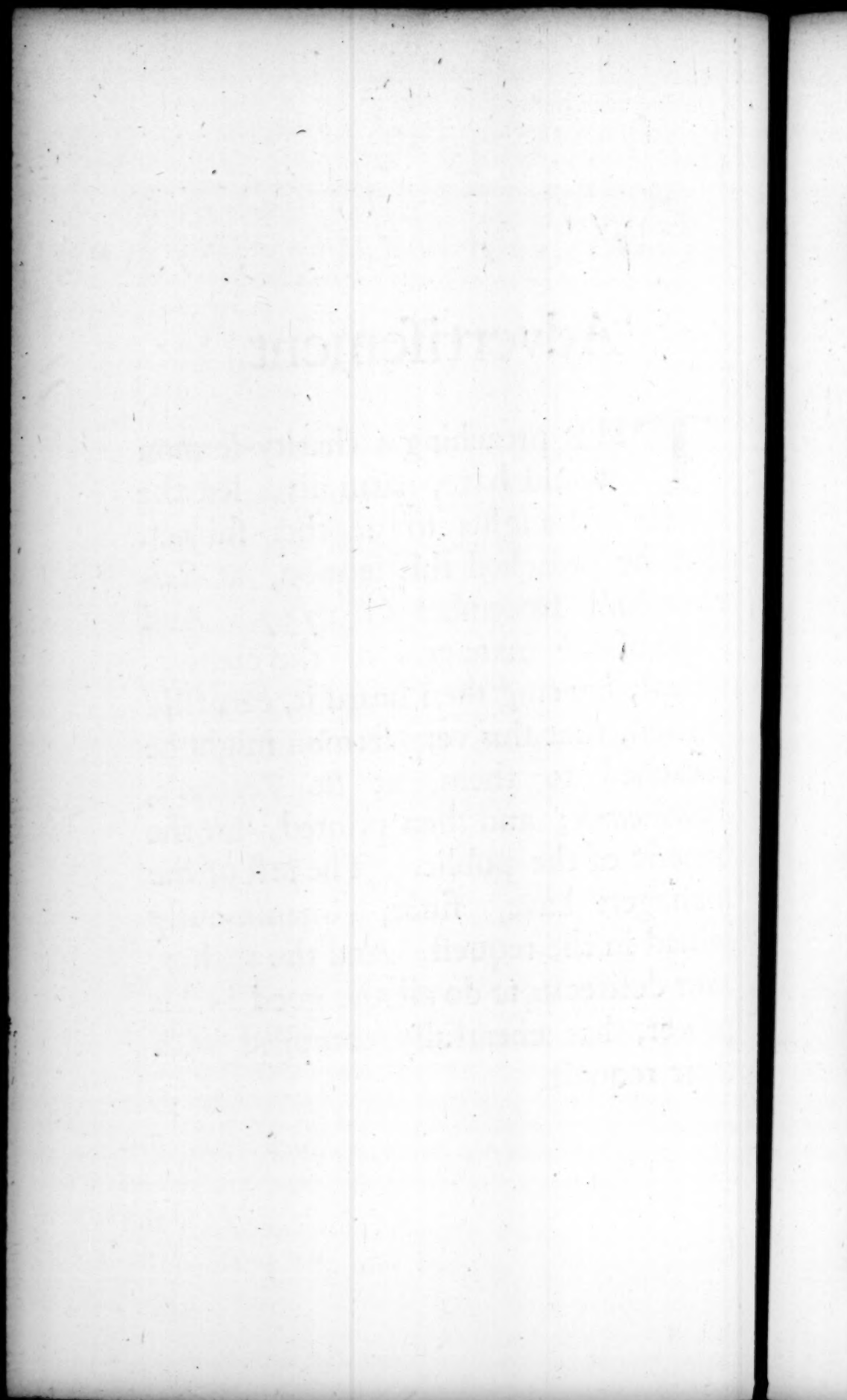


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Advertisement.

THE preaching a charity-fermon would have, naturally, led the *author's* thoughts to another subject. But he preached this fermon, at *Salter's-hall*, December 6. 1757. And some of the managers of the charity-school, haveing then heard it, earnestly desired, that this very fermon might be preached to them, at *St. Thomas's, Southwark*; and then printed, for the benefit of the public. The rest of the managers have, since, unanimously joined in the request. And the author, ever desirous to do all the good in his power, has chearfully complied with their request.





ACTS xiii. 38, 39.

Be it known unto you, therefor, men and brethren ; that, through this man, is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And, by him, all, that believe, are justified, from all things, from which you could not be justified, by the law of Moses.

I have been desired to give you the following discourse, upon the præsent occasion.

***** H E N *Paul and Barnabas* set out,
* W * upon their first apostolic journey,
***** they went, among other places, to
Antioch in Pisidia. And, as it was their
constant custom, wherever they came, first
to preach the gospel to the *jews*, and *devout*
gentiles, who attended the synagogue-ser-
vice, they entered into the jewish syna-
gogue,

gogue, on the sabbath-day; and sat down; very probably, in the chairs of the *doctors*, or teachers, to intimate their errand.

The *antient jews* used to read a portion of the *law*, and another of the *prophets*, in their synagogues, every sabbath-day; by which means, they read them through, once, every year. 'Till that reading was over, *Paul* and *Barnabas* sat, as hearers. But, after the reading of the *scriptures*, the *rulers of the synagogue* used to permit, or desire, whom they pleased, to expound what had been read; or to make some useful exhortation to the people. And, most probably, knowing somewhat of the character of these two *apostles*; the *rulers of the synagogue* sent unto them, desiring that, if they had any doctrine, or pious exhortation, to deliver unto the people, they would speak, freely and openly, in the synagogue.—Upon that, *St. Paul* stood up, and made this speech, of which our text is a part.—The design of it was, evidently, to induce the *jews*, and *devout gentiles*, that were present, in the synagogue, to embrace the *christian religion*, as more excellent than *the law of Moses*: and, particularly, in that it offered the forgiveness of all manner of sins; and such a full

full and complete justification, as they could not expect, from the *law of Moses*.

Our text contains, in a few words, the substance of the great gospel-doctrine of *justification*. And St. Paul hath, here, given us a summary of what he hath said, more largely, in *his epistles*; particularly in the two epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*. I, therefor, would desire your diligent attention, whilst I endeavor to explaine, and apply, a text, of so great importance. Which I propose to do, in the following manner.

I. By showing you, what is meant, by *justification*.

II. How imperfect the *justification* was, which the *jews* could expect, from the *law of Moses*.

III. How full and sufficient a *justification* may be obtained, by the method, proposed in the *gospel*.

IV. The method of obtaining *justification*, proposed in the *gospel*, is, by *faith*.

V. The benefit of this *justification* extendeth unto all, that believe; whether they were formerly *jews*, or *gentiles*.

VI. I would conclude with a brief application.

I. I am

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I. I am to show you what is meant by *justification*.—*Through this man, [that is, through Jesus Christ] is preached unto you, the forgivenesse of sins; and, by him, all, that believe, are justified.*

What is the favor, here promised them? It hath, often, and very properly, been observed, that the word, *justification*, is a *forensic* term; *that is*, a term, taken from the *roman forum*, or a court of judicature. For a person, that is either acquitted, as innocent of the crime, laid to his charge; or pardoned; is, very properly, said, to be *justified*; to stand right in the court; or to be freed from the sentence of condemnation.—That is to *be justified among men*.

To *be justified, in the sight of GOD*, is, to stand right in the court of heaven; that is, in the divine favor; or to be treated, as righteous, before GOD, considered as law-giver, or judge. If any man were perfectly innocent, he would be justified by his *works*. That, and that alone, would be, in the scriptural sense, to be justified by *works*, or *merit*, or according to *desert*. And “the reward would be reckoned to him, *not of grace, but of debt.*”

They,

They, who have transgressed, must be justified by *grace*, or favor; if they be justified at all. And the justification of such persons is, otherwise, called the pardon, *forgiveness*, or remission, of *their sins*. So it is called, here, in our text, and in many other places, both of the old and new testament. As mankind, therefor, are all considered as offenders; by the *forgiveness* of *sins*, and by the being *justified from all things*, is meant one and the same thing. For, when the justification of a sinner is spoken of, the two phrases are exactly parallel. And the same thing is to be understood; whether it be said, *men are justified*, or *their sins are remitted, forgiven, pardoned, blotted out, not imputed unto them, covered, or remembered no more*.

II. Our text leads us to consider, how imperfect the *justification* was, which the *jews* could expect, from the *law of Moses*.—
 “Through this man, is preached, unto you,
 “the forgiveness of sins; and, by him, all,
 “that believe, are justified, *from all things*;
 “*from which you could not be justified, by the*
 “*law of Moses.*”

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In order to understand this, the more clearly ; let us trace the matter from the begining. — In paradise, our first parents were justified by perfect innocence. But, when they had transgressed, they could, no longer, look for justification, that way.

If it should be inquired, “ Under what “ *law* were mankind, from *Adam* to *Moses* ? ” I would answer, Under the law of innocence, or the *moral law* ; under which, all mankind now are, and ever have been. — If it be farther inquired, “ By what method, “ were the *patriarchs* to expect justification ? ” I would answer, — By the grace, or favor, which was then reveled, more particularly in that first promise, *That the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head*. Which, in their situation, at that time, might teach our first parents, “ That, though sin, misery, “ and death, had been introduced, by the “ old serpent, their grand enemy ; yet he “ should be conquered, by the seed of the “ woman ; and righteousness, life, and “ happiness, finally, prevail.” — Most evidently, their justification, after men became *sinners*, was to be *by grace*, or favor ; and upon lower terms than perfect innocence ; *that is*, by *faith*, joined with sincere and habitual,

habitual, though imperfect, obedience. If they, from a love to truth and righteousness, received those revelations, which GOD vouchsafed to make unto them; and habitually acted according to such a *faith*; then they had hopes given them, that GOD would be merciful; *that is*, in other words, that he would pardon their sins, or justify them.

The revelation of *faith's* being accounted, unto him, for *righteousness*, was, most clearly, made known to the patriarch, *Abraham*. And, “ In him, it was promised, that all the nations of the earth were to be blessed: and that his spiritual seed were to be, all such of mankind, as would imitate his faith and obedience; whether they were his natural descendents, or no.

Gen. xv.
6.

Long after that covenant, made with *Abraham*, GOD entered into another, and a peculiar, covenant, with the nation of *Israel*. That was called the *Horeb*, or *Sinai*, covenant; or the *law of Moses*.—From *Adam* to *Moses*, the law of innocence [or the moral law] was the rule and standard of what was perfectly holy, or virtuous. Though, when the *patriarchs* found, that they fell short of a perfect conformity to that law, they had intimations given them, that their

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faith, when accompanied with *sincerity*, or habitual obedience, would be accounted unto them for righteousness. But, lest the memory of the original constitution of innocence should be lost, or the notions of it obscured, it was again revived, in *the law of Moses*. Onely, instead of the one positive command, “To abstain from the fruit of that particular tree, in *paradise*, known by the name of *the tree of knowlege of good and evil*,” GOD gave the *Israelites*, several laws, about rites and ceremonies, to preserve them from the spreading contagion of *idolatry*.—Thus was *the law given, because of transgressions*; that is, to show the *Israelites*, the evil of *idolatry*, and of every vice; and to convince them, that (as they were transgressors, as well as other men) they were liable to *death*, the penalty of sin, according to their law; and, therefor, must have recourse to the *patriarchal*, or *abrahamic*, covenant, for pardon and acceptance with GOD.

As the original constitution of *innocence* was renewed, in the *Sinai-covenant*, the terms of it are expressed, in the same way; namely, “*Do this, and live*; but disobey, “in any particular, and die. Or, *cursed is*
“every

Gal. iii.
19.

See Mr.
Locke on
Gal. iii.
19.

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36.

"every one, who continueth not, in all things, that are written, in the book of the law, to do them."—And, as these terms extended unto that law, in general; in which, were many positive institutions, St. Paul very justly observes, *The law entered, that the offence might abound*; [or, "so that, (a) by the entering in, of the law, the offence did abound."] *That is*, There were, in the law of *Moses*, a great number of præcepts; to the transgression of any of which, *death* was annexed, as the penalty. Whereas; there had been but one præcept of that kind, before the publishing of the law; *namely*, that, given to our first parents, concerning the forbidden fruit. — By the law of *Moses*, then, the *Israelites* were condemned to death, without mercy; not onely for their offences against the *moral* præcepts, but also for transgressing the *positive* institutions.

Rom. v.
20.

It is true; there were *sacrifices* appointed, not onely for their offences against the
ceremonial

(a) ἵνα αἰτιασθῇ, the causal that, signifies the designed event. ἵνα ἐκβῇ, the eventual that, or so that, is used to denote the actual, not the designed, event. See Matt. i. 15; 23. John ix. 39. and xii. 37,—40. Compare Matt. x. 35, 36. See, also, Dr. Hammond on Matt. i. 22.

ceremonial law; but, also, to free them, in some smaller cases, from *moral* * guilt: but that was onely in a political view. For it doeth not appear, that, by such *sacrifices*, they could obtain justification unto eternal life.—Such sacrifices could do no more than rescue them from condemnation, in any of the courts in *Israel*: that is, from dying, by the hands of the civil magistrate, or by some immediate judgement of GOD: and so onely prolonged this temporal life, 'till death came upon them, by the course of nature, or because of some other great transgression of the *law*.—Accordingly; the author of *the epistle to the Hebrews* saies, expressly, “That their gifts and sacrifices—
 “ could not make him, that did the service,
 “ perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.
 “ For the blood of bulls, and of goats; and
 “ the ashes of the [*red*] heifer, wherewith
 “ they sprinkled the unclean, sanctified *onely*
 “ to the purifying of the flesh.” And again, he intimates, that “there was no perfection,
 “ by the *Levitical* priesthood.” “And that
 “ the *law* made nothing perfect.” And finally, “The *law*, haveing *onely* the shadow
 “ of good things to come, and not the very
 “ image, could never, with those *sacrifices*,
 “ which

* See Lev.
vi. 1—7.

Heb. ix.
9.

Ver. 13.

Heb. vii.
11.

Ver. 19.

Heb. x. 1.

“ which they offered, year by year, continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.”—Now; herein consisted the imperfection of that *justification*, which the *jews* might expect, from the *law of Moses*. For such great moral wickedness, as idolatry, murder, adultery, and the like, there were no *sacrifices* appointed.—Hence it was, that the royal *psalmist*, after the two black crimes of *murder* and *adultery*, prayed thus, “ Deliver me from blood-guiltiness. — For
 “ thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I
 “ give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering.”—In such cases, the *law* had appointed no *sacrifice*. And, where sacrifices were appointed, they cleansed only to the purifying of the flesh; or assured the offender, of no more than a reprieve from dying, for that particular crime, either by the sentence of the jewish magistrate, or by some immediate judgement from GOD.

Psalms li.
 14; 16.

Upon this representation, you may, perhaps, inquire; “ Did they all perish, that
 “ lived under the *law*? Were none of them
 “ justified, in the sight of GOD? None of
 “ them made perfect, as pertaining to the
 “ conscience?”—To which, I would answer; *Yes, certainly!* Many of them, that
 lived

Rom. iii.
20.

lived under the *law*, were justified, in the fight of GOD. But then, they were not justified, by virtue of *that law*. For St.

Paul assures us, that, "by the deeds of
"the *law*, there shall no flesh be justified,
"in his fight." For, by the *law*, was the
"knowledge of sin; and of death's being the
"penalty, annexed to the transgression of it.
"But it contained no offers, no promises,
"of mercy, unto those, who, in any par-
"ticular, offended against it." — And the
same thing he hath expressly asserted, else-

Gal. iii.
10, 11, 12.

where. "For, as many as are of the works
"of the *law*, are under a curse. For it is
"written, *Cursed is every one, that continueth*

Deut.
xxvii. 26.

"*not, in all things, which are written, in the*
"*book of the law, to do them.* — But that no
"man is justified, by the *law*, in the fight

Habbak.
ii. 4.

"of GOD, is evident. For *the just by faith*
"*shall live.* Whereas; the *law* is not of
"faith; but it's terms are, *The man, that*

Lev.
xviii. 5.

"*doeth these things, shall live in (or by)*
"*them (a).*" Whoever, therefor, of the
jews were justified, were not justified, by
the

(a) It is said, Lev. xviii. 5. [*Thou shalt keep my statutes, and my judgements; which if a man do, he shall live in [or, by,] them.*] The antient *jews* understood, thereby, liveing, and being

the law of Moses; but by the patriarchal, or abrahamic, covenant. According to which, faith was accounted, unto them, for righteousness. And that patriarchal (or abrahamic) covenant was, in substance, the same with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which leads me,

III. To show you, how full and sufficient a justification may be obtained, by the method proposed in the gospel.—“Through this man, is preached, unto you, the forgiveness of sins, and, by him, all, that believe, are justified, from all things; from which, the jews could not be justified, by the law of Moses.”

being happy, for ever. *Vivet in eis vitâ sempiternâ.* Targum Onkelos. *Vivet in eis vitâ seculi; & portio ejus cum justis erit.* Targum Jonathan. *Quoniam retributio ejus, qui operabitur illa, est, ut vivat vitam æternam.* Versio Arabic.

St. Paul, once and again, refers to that passage, in *Leviticus*: and interprets it, in the same sense, with the above-mentioned, antient jews. [See Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 10, 11, 12.] And I see no reason to think, that St. Paul argued *ad homines*.—On the contrary; the understanding it, in the sense, here given, seems necessary, in order to make out the connection; and show the force, and validity, of the apostle’s argument.—The passage may be, also, found, *Nehem. ix. 29. Ezek. xx. 11; 13; 21.*

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You have seen, already, how imperfect a justification was granted, by the *law of Moses*. — As none of the jews came up to the terms of innocence, or perfect obedience, the *law* condemned them all, to death, without mercy. For, in many cases, there were no *sacrifices* appointed, or accepted. And, in other cases, where they might have been forgiven, upon offering the appointed sacrifice, it rescued them from death, onely for the præsent. It did not make the person, who brought the *sacrifice*, perfect, as to his conscience; or intitle him to the blessing of *eternal life*. — But, by *Christ Jesus*, or under the gospel, *we have preached, unto us, the forgivenesse of sins; that is of all sins, great or small, in moral cases, or as to positive institutions*. For, if we comply with the christian revelation, we shall be justified, from *all things*, all our transgressions, all the crimes, that can be laid to our charge; though, from many such crimes, there was no justification, for the jews, by the *law of Moses*.

It is true, when the jews found that, by the deeds of the law, no flesh could be justified, in the sight of GOD; and that the law condemned all transgressors, to death, without mercy;

mercy; they were naturally led to look back to the *abrahamic* covenant, which contained a method of justification, upon much easier terms; or (which comes to the same thing) the rigor of the *law* was designed to make them turn their eyes unto the *faith*, which was afterwards to be reveled. And, therefor, *the law* is repræsented, as a school-master, (or a severe tutor, to children,) to make the *jews* long to get out of their state of minority, and to come into the glorious liberty of the gospel: or to bring them unto *Christ*; that they might be treated with the manly liberty, of persons, got out of their minority: and *that they might be justified by faith*, or by the method, præscribed in the gospel. — And that the dispensation of the *law* was not final, but had a farther reference, St. *Paul* has planely intimated; where he calls “*Christ the end of the law*, “*for righteousness, unto every one that believeth*. For *Moses* describeth the righteousness, which is of the *law*, in this manner; *The man, that doeth these things, shall live by them.*”

Gal. iii.
23, &c.

Rom. x.
4, 5.

The method of the justification of sinners hath been, all along, the same; from the fall of our first parents, unto this day;

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namely, not by merit, or perfect innocence, but by *grace*, or favor (*b*). Onely, I would have you observe that, in the *gospel*, there are the most clear discoveries of this method of justification. For it is there, in the most plane and expresse manner, asserted, that the penitent shall have all their sins forgiven; and be justified, not from one or two crimes, but from all their transgressions, how many and how great soever.

IV. "The method of obtaining justification, proposed in the *gospel*, is *by faith*."
—*By him, such, as believe, are justified.*

Observe it carefully, "They are not said, "to have been *justified from all eternity*;" but, by him, all, that *believe*, are justified. It is not *before faith*, and *without faith*, but upon their *believing*. So saith St. Paul, in our text. And (I suppose), St. Paul's account of this matter may be depended upon.

What

(*b*) The need, which the *gentiles* [as well as *jews*] had, of *justification*, upon lower terms than perfect innocence, is represented, by Mr. Locke, in his *Reasonableness of Christianity*, &c. See his works, in folio, vol. 2d. p. 478. in the fourth edition, p. 511, &c.

What that *faith* is, which is required, in order to our justification, is clearly expressed, in many places of the new testament (c.) And the sum of what is there said, is, "That, the *faith*, which justifies a christian, must not be a bare assent to the truth of the gospel; but such a belief, as influences to obedience."

It is true, St. Paul says, *We conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* But that was said, in opposition to the jews, or jewish christians, who were for seeking justification, by the law of Moses. Whereas; *faith*, or the gospel, is, of itself, sufficient; without our observeing the jewish law. But *faith* in the christian revelation will neither justify, nor save, us; unlessse we do the works, required, in that revelation.—Or, in other words, unlessse we lead an holy, christian life, as well as believe the christian religion to be true, we have no reason, from any thing, said, in the new testament, to expect either to be justified, or saved.

Rom. iii.
28.

And

(c) The Cambridge ms reads ver. 39. thus, *And by repentance, every one, that believeth in him, is justified, &c.* But that various reading has not sufficient authority.

James ii.
14. &c.

And accordingly, St. *James* hath declared, that *faith, without works, is dead, being alone. That Abraham was justified, by works; when he offered up his son, Isaac, on the altar; that his faith co-operated with his works; and, by his works, his faith was rendered perfect.* From all which, he concludes, *that a man is justified by works, and not by faith onely; and that, as the body, without the spirit, is dead; so faith, without works, is dead also.*

V. “The benefit of this justification extendeth, unto *all, that believe; whether they were formerly jews, or gentiles.*”

By him, ALL, that believe, are justified.

John iii.
16.

Our *Savior* himself hath said, *GOD so loved the world, as to give his onely-begotten son, that, whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but should have everlasting life.* And St. *Paul* is very clear, in other places, as well as our text, in asserting the free grace, or generous, extensive nature, of the gospel-offers; and in showing, that, wherever christianity is preached, none are excluded from the benefit of it; unlesse such, as exclude themselves, by their own wilful unbelief, or disobedience. For, as he, in
expresse

expresse words, declares, GOD *would have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowlege of the truth.* St. Peter, also, preached the same doctrine; expressly declareing, that GOD *is long-suffering towards us: not willing that any should perish; but that all should come to repentence.*

1 Tim. ii.
4.

2 Pet. iii.
9.

The narrow and legal spirit of the jews was, for confining salvation, absolutely and unconditionally, to their own, *elect* nation; *that is*, to a small part of the human race; and they represented almighty GOD, as haveing, absolutely, reprobated the greatest part of mankind, or doomed them, to inevitable destruction.—Whereas; GOD is the merciful father of us all; whose *tender mercies* are (even in the old testament) said, to be *over all his works*; and he himself declares, that *he delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but had rather that all sinners would turn and live.*—The generous spirit of the gospel proclames the most free-grace, and extensive goodnesse. For there, *the grace of GOD, which bringeth salvation unto all men*, is said to have *appeared, with it's bright beams*, upon a benighted world. And whoever perishes, perishes through his own fault, onely.

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The sum of what has been said, comes to this; "By *justification*, is meant, either "acquitting a person, as innocent of the "crime, laid to his charge; or, upon "certain terms, pardoning him, if he "hath been guilty. Whoever is justified, "according to the gospel of *Christ*, he "is justified, from all the crimes, that can "be alleged against him; and shall not "only be raised from the dead, as all "mankind shall be; but he shall, also, be "made glorious and happy for ever.—*Faith*, "or a compliance with the gospel-method "of salvation, is the condition, on which "we are to hope for justification, or acceptance with GOD: — This mercy extendeth "unto all, that believe. And GOD affordeth "us all, sufficient help; so that we may all "believe, obey, and be happy; if it be not "our own faults."

Application. (1.) From what has been said, we may gather, what the apostle *Paul* accounted *legal preaching*.

The judaizeing teachers gave great disturbance, to the gentile churches, by insisting upon it, that men might be *justified*, by the *law of Moses*; and by preaching up the necessity

necessity of the *gentile christians* being circumcised, and observeing that *law*, or else *they* could not be saved. Unlessie they added the *jewish religion*, to the *christian religion*, they prætended that they could not be justified, or saved. — As if the gospel-method, alone, and of itself, had been insufficient. Now, that was *legal preaching*. That was adding the *law* to the *gospel*, as the method of justification before GOD. Whereas; St. Paul sais, “ That, by *Jesus Christ*, all, that “ believe, are justified, from all things, from “ which they could not be justified, by the “ *law of Moses*.”

Acts xv.
1.

(2.) From what hath been said, you may easily see what you have to expect.

You can, none of you, expect to be justified, by merit, or to plead perfect innocence, at the grand tribunal. You must, therefor, have recourse to an easier and milder method of justification. And that (as the text informs you) must be, by *faith*. But, if you take in the whole gospel-account, you will find, that it must be by such a *faith*, as is the root, or principle, of an holy life; — a *faith*, working by love; or producing the excellent fruit of righteousness, or holiness; *that is*, in one word,

by a compliance with the terms of the gospel. For, by *faith*, in the new testament, is often meant the whole *gospel*.

This is the way ; in which alone, you can rationally hope to have your sins forgiven, and your transgressions covered. — How careful, therefor, should you all be, to comply with this method ? Nay ; how exceeding thankful ought you to be, unto almighty GOD, that, in his abundant mercy, he hath sent his son, into our world, to make such a gracious offer ; and to proclame such glad tidings of great joy, unto all nations, and all persons, that will but imbrace the gracious offer ? Suppose your case were desperate and hopelesse, and that you had no prospect of forgivenesse, or of justification before GOD ; how acceptable would the offer of pardon, and mercy, then be ? Suppose you were to be tried by the law of innocence, you would all be condemned ; and none of you could hope, in that way, to be justified before GOD. But, notwithstanding the terror, which that law denounced, unto those, that were under it, GOD hath sent forth, unto us, the sweet sound of *mercy*, and hath commissioned his holy apostles to declare, that *we are not under the law, but*
under

under grace : and that there is no condemnation, to those, that are in Christ Jesus; provided they walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. How ought our very hearts to rejoice within us, at the sweet sound of mercy? How should we lament and acknowledge our sins? turn from them? and flee for refuge, unto this hope, that is set before us?—Have you any concern for your everlasting welfare? any desire to rise unto the resurrection of life; and to escape the sentence of condemnation; when you stand before your righteous and impartial judge, in the last day?—For GOD's sake then, and for the sake of your own souls, apply to this method of justification, and acceptance with GOD. Break off your sins by repentance, and your iniquities, by showing mercy: turn unto the Lord, while there is hope; and call upon him, while he is near. Let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the Lord will yet be merciful to him. — Through *Jesus Christ*, there is proclaimed mercy, and forgiveness, for every sin, and for all kinds and degrees of sin; provided they sincerely repent, and amend.—*If any man have sined, and repented of it, there is an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ, the righteous; who is*

1 John ii.
1, 2.

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the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours onely, but for the sins of all penitent persons, throughout the whole world.—If you, often and earnestly, pray to GOD, and watch over your hearts and lives, that your conversation may be, as becometh the gospel of *Christ*, you may be of that happy number, whose sins are forgiven, and whose iniquities are blotted out. — What a pity is it that, when GOD lays no bar, in the way to men's salvation, men should be so foolish, so wicked, so cruel unto themselves, as to neglect their own salvation, and to persist in sin, 'till it proves their ruine?

As to those of you, who are sincere believers; — how ought you to rejoice, and persevere in the well-chosen course, in which you are already walking? You are in a pardoned, justified state: and, as you are habitually holy, and your own hearts condemn you not, you may have confidence towards GOD. A few days more, and your warfare shall be accomplished, and your victory secure. Watch and pray, that you may not be overcome, by the remaining temptations, which you may meet with, in this state of trial. Instead of following the great, or the multitude, to do evil; endeavor to make
your

your good works shine out, before all around you: that others, beholding them, may glorifie your father, who is in heaven. By a pious and virtuous, a prudent and exemplary life, adorn the doctrine of GOD, your savior, in all things. Let your families and your closets be witnesses to your stated devotion. Be sure to keep holy the lord's day. Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, — as the manner of too many is.—And you ought to make conscience of attending at the *table of the lord*. —But remember, that the means are of no value, any farther, than they promote righteousness, which is final, and of eternal, unalterable obligation. — In a day of such distinguishing light and liberty, as you, at present, enjoy, there is more knowlege, and greater holiness, justly required at your hands. And, if you, who profess the *christian* faith, do not lead lives becoming your *christian* profession; you, in effect, deny the faith, and are worse than the very *infidels*.

To conclude: — As you desire the pardon of your sins, and to be justified, in the sight of GOD, from all your transgressions;

as

as you value the credit of the *christian* religion, and desire the everlasting welfare of all around you; Nay; as ever you hope to meet with joy and acceptance, before the tribunal of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, in that decisive day: — If there be any arguments of sufficient weight; any motives, that can deserve your regard; By these, I would, in the most earnest and affectionate manner, presse, and exhort you, to show your faith, by your works; and carefully to live according to the rules of our most holy religion. *For* [whether we think of it, or no; it is one of the most important truths, in the whole world; that] *we must all appear, before the judgement seat of Christ, in the great and solemn day; when, and where, we shall, each of us, recieve, according to the deeds done in the body; whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil.*

2 Cor. v.
10.

T H E

STATE of the SCHOOL.

I am desired to lay before you, the account of the præsent state of this charity-school; which is, as follows.

“ T H E foundation of this school was
 “ laid, in the year 1687. in the
 “ reign of King *James the second*, when a
 “ school was set up, by one, *Poulton*, a
 “ *jesuit*. And public notice was given,
 “ that he would instruct the children of
 “ the poor, *gratis*. Upon which, Mr.
 “ *Arthur Shallet*, Mr. *Samuel Warburton*,
 “ and Mr. *Ferdinando Holland*, laid the
 “ foundation of *this school*, to prævent the
 “ dangerous consequences of a *popish* school;
 “ and provide for the instruction of the
 “ children of the poor, in the *protestant*
 “ way.

“ The number of scholars, at first, was
 “ 40. afterwards, increased to 50. and now,
 “ to 180. They are taught to read, write,
 “ and cypher; and are instructed, in the
 “ principles of our common christianity;
 “ and

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“ and thereby qualified for the service of
 “ GOD and *man*.

“ It may be said to be the *first* school ;
 “ in which, the *protestant dissenters* were
 “ concerned. Here objects are recieved,
 “ without distinction of *parties* : the com-
 “ mon good being intended.—It is situated,
 “ in one of the poorest parts of this great
 “ metropolis. And the children of the
 “ poorest sort of watermen, fishermen,
 “ and others, are here taught, without any
 “ expence to their parents : and are furnish-
 “ ed with bibles, testaments, catechisms;
 “ and writeing, and cyphering, books.

“ The girls are, also, imployed, in make-
 “ shirts, shifts, and stockings ; which are
 “ given away, among the children, belong-
 “ ing to the school, at the discretion of the
 “ managers.

“ It is designed, likewise, to appoint a
 “ certain portion of time, every week, for
 “ the *bigger boys*, to be imployed, in *work-*
 “ *ing* ; as the stock will hold out.

“ The charges have been defrayed, by
 “ the gifts, and subscriptions, of private
 “ persons ; with an annual collection, in
 “ this place, on new year’s day ; — one, in
 “ the city ; — and, of late, one, at *West-*
 “ *minster* ;

“ *monster* ;—together with the kind remembrance of the said school, by some, in “ their *last wills*.”

Need I, after what you have heard, to implore your liberality, for the poor children of this charity-school ?

You have been assured, that GOD, by *Christ Jesus*, has manifested such abundant mercy and compassion to us ; as to declare, that he is ready to pardon all our sins, which we have repented of, and forsaken. — This ought, certainly, to induce us to show mercy, and compassion, unto our fellow-creatures ; even as GOD has had such great compassion upon us.

And one remarkable opportunity, for your showing such compassion, and charity, towards your fellow-creatures, does now present itself : I mean, in the collection, which is going to be made, for the children of this *charity-school*, who could not (without some difficulty) have such an education, were it not for your liberality.

By your generous assistance, they may be enabled to be comforts to their relations and friends, orderly and useful members of society, loyal subjects to the best of kings,

E

ornaments

ornaments to the church of *Christ*; and, finally, brought to everlasting salvation. —

To conduce towards their good, in so many views, must make the hearts of the truly charitable to rejoice. — These poor children cannot recompense you. But you shall be amply recompensed, in the last day, and at the resurrection of the just.

Let, therefore, those, who are rich in this world; and all others, in proportion to their circumstances; be rich, in good works; ready to distribute; and willing, cheerfully, to communicate: laying up, to themselves, the best treasure, against that awful time to come; that they may, at the end of their course, put forth their hands; and lay hold on the glorious prize of eternal life, through *Jesus Christ*, Amen!



T H E E N D.